

**世界経済外交大学での名誉博士号授与(4月30日、於:タシケント)
林外務大臣大臣スピーチ**

First Deputy Chairman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) and Rector of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Your Excellency, Mr. Sodyq SAFOEV,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am HAYASHI Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. It is a great honor for me to receive today an honorary doctorate from the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, which has produced many government officials and diplomats of Uzbekistan. I am grateful for your kindness and would like to say a few words on this occasion.

It is my great pleasure to visit Uzbekistan as Minister for Foreign Affairs in this memorable year of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Uzbekistan. This is my first visit to Uzbekistan, and I have been longing for this visit, because many people told me that Uzbekistan is a very friendly country. The heartwarming hospitality I receive in Uzbekistan has made me keenly aware how Uzbek people see Japan.

I strongly feel that behind the good relations between our countries lies the deep emotional ties between our forefathers. After the war, the Japanese internees contributed to the projects here including the construction of the Navoi Theater. There were many Japanese people who passed away here without fulfilling their dreams of returning to Japan. People of Uzbekistan buried them with respect and have maintained these cemeteries. We are grateful to the people of Uzbekistan for their kindness and generosity.

Furthermore, since Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, Japan has been a close partner in its development, providing various forms of cooperation, such as infrastructure development and human resource development. The government of Uzbekistan has, in turn, always

placed importance on its relations with Japan. The number of high-level visits including the visit of President MIRZIYOYEV in 2019 have strengthened bilateral relations. This is the reason why current relationship between our countries has developed into the strategic partnership.

In this regard, His Excellency Mr. SAFOEV, have contributed to the development of bilateral relations for many years as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Group for Cooperation with Parliament of Japan. Mr. SAFOEV was the first person in Uzbekistan to be awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. I would like to congratulate you once again.

Since Mr. SAFOEV became the Rector of the University, he has made great efforts to take Japanese studies to a new level including establishment of the Center for Japanese Studies. I would like to express my sincere respect for his endeavor. Students majoring in Japanese studies in this university will be key figures of future bilateral relations, and Japan will support the University's efforts to enhance the quality of education and academic research on Japan. I would like to ask Ambassador FUJIYAMA and his staff at the Embassy to continue close consultations with Mr. SAFOEV.

Taking this opportunity, let me mention the situation of Ukraine. I would like to stress that Russia's aggression against Ukraine constitutes a serious violation of international law and undermines the foundation of the entire international order not limited to Europe but including Asia. The international community is making concerted efforts to stop Russia's aggression as soon as possible. I hope that all students of this University will play an active role in the world in the future to solidify peace and stability in the international community.

In closing my remarks, I would like to reiterate my deepest gratitude for this honorary doctoral degree from the University of World Economy and Diplomacy. I thank you for your kind attention.